

Date: February 19, 2023

To: Members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, and other state representatives

Subject: Opposition to H.B. 5653 An Act Establishing an Excise Tax on Ammunition to Provide Funding for Community Gun Violence and Intervention Program Grants

Dear members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee;

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed tax on ammunition. Ammunition in this state is already subject to the sales tax (6.35%) and the Pittman-Robertson Act tax (11%). Subjecting ammunition to another tax will only serve to have a disproportional financial impact on those with fewer or limited financial means.

Such a tax, if enacted, would simply be just one more financial barrier to lower income and minority communities. Both of these communities already face significant barriers in the form of the process that is required to obtain a firearm permit or certificate from the state in order to exercise the state granted privilege to purchase; firearms, magazines and or ammunition.

By making ammunition more expensive, many law abiding citizens will not be able to afford the ammunition they use to effectively train with and or defend their families and or themselves. This potentially will lead to the less safe usage and ownership of firearms in those communities who most need equalizing forms of self-defense from the criminal element who prey upon them.

If the ultimate goal is to address the inner city violence and crime there are better ways to address the root causes of that violence and crime that do not, once again, put the burden on, or seek to once again punish, the law abiding citizen gun owner. There are better ways to address the inadequate access to healthcare and education, mental illness, drug use, and poverty that are the typical underlying causes of violence and crime. Criminals will, *as they always do*, simply circumvent this latest form of gun control running under the guise of an "ammunition tax".

I strongly urge you to oppose this proposed tax on ammunition bill. It will, like most gun control which only affects the law abiding, do more harm than good. It will only serve to further restrict the Constitutional Rights of those law abiding citizens who are already struggling financially to exercise their natural and fundamental right to effective self-defense.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Stephen Bennett
New Haven, CT